



GAVIN NEWSOM
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

May 8, 2017

Mr. Chuck Bonham, Director
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
1416 9th Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Cc: Assemblymember Richard Bloom
Lynn Cullens, Mountain Lion Foundation

Director Bonham,

I am writing to express my gratitude and support for your department's pursuit of alternatives to mandatory lethal takes of mountain lions, which makes strides toward protecting mountain lion populations in California.

Existing policy that requires the Department of Fish and Wildlife to issue depredation permits in response to a mountain lion taking property can be counterproductive to conservation efforts associated with California's mountain lion populations. The sensitive nature of these human-wildlife interactions prompts creative solutions that would allow the Department to respond in a way that is consistent with the conservation needs of our mountain lion populations.

As the Department reviews its options for alternatives to lethal take, I would encourage the consideration of the policy objectives outlined by Assemblymember Bloom (Attachment A). These objectives involve a comprehensive approach to mountain lion depredation responses that include: (1) assessment of the underlying causes of specific depredations, (2) suggestions to landowners for avoiding future conflicts, (3) allowing the issuance of a non-lethal permit if requested by landowners, (4) considering the value and genetic health of the mountain lion population in question prior to issuing a permit for lethal take.

Mountain lion conservation has been an important issue to me and my family, which compels me to voice support of this effort. My father, Judge William Newsom, is a longtime mountain lion advocate and the former president of the Mountain Lion Preservation Foundation. I have also worked for the appropriate protection of these animals and their habitat. Retaliatory killing of mountain lions is not the answer to ensuring the safety of livestock, and state policy must enable decision-making that aligns with conservation goals.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gavin Newsom", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

GAVIN NEWSOM
Lieutenant Governor

